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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Haiti

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SUBJECT Survey of Political and Economic Conditions/
Need for Sweeping Reforms

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1. There is Nov 1952 a great feeling of dissatisfaction and unrest in Haiti, with Magloire's Government held entirely responsible by the people. Unless drastic reforms are quickly instituted, there is every indication that a revolution will occur within the next six months, or within a year at the outside. The general feeling among Haitians is that Magloire's Government is doing nothing to advance the people's economy, nor is it cognizant of or interested in their problems. The government is rife with graft; in fact, the entire regime has broken down into communal rule, with regional leaders dictating to their responsible areas as they see fit, and buying favors from the government to suit their individual purposes.

2. For example, nation-wide land reforms are initiated by the government, but are then ignored in most of the districts by the individual leaders who refuse, for personal reasons, to observe the law, and who then gain release from having to do so through graft. As a result, agricultural advancement is sadly retarded; natives work hard and raise their crops and are paid accordingly only six months out of the year, and live on credit the balance of the time. No new crops are introduced as they could well be, and the country's economy continues to suffer.

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4. If the government requires additional money, it looks immediately to the merchant and the businessman. This is accomplished by the government's public accountants who demand to see the businessman's books at any time during the year; any error found in bookkeeping is fined from three to ten times the amount of the error. Another method of obtaining funds from the

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businessman is to ask for donations to a civil or communal cause; if the donation is refused, the man is fined twice the original request on some trumped-up charge. Needless to say, the money so received never goes to the intended cause, but is dissipated among many hands, and disappears. The Chamber of Commerce is powerless to represent the businessman in such unfair practices, for it is completely dominated by the government.

25X1 5. Recent funds were allocated to a [REDACTED] to rebuild Haiti's sadly neglected roads. Again, the people feel that these 10 or 12 million dollars will be so badly handled, through graft, that the intended reconstruction program will result in possibly 10 per cent of the total estimated work.

25X1 6. The only person in Government championing the people's cause in Haiti today [REDACTED] is Daniel Fignole, a Deputy from Port-au-Prince, who is fully aware of the needs for national reforms and a betterment of national economy. He is extremely popular among the people of Port-au-Prince, but it is said that he might be equally critical of another government if it did not see things his way. Although elections are supposedly free, nobody really feels that they are conducted in a fair manner. As a result, the better educated people, the merchants and businessmen of Haiti do not even bother to vote in elections, since they feel the military control the end results. This is another indication of revolution as the only remedy to reform.

7. Communism has been virtually wiped out of Haiti today, and it is estimated that there are no more than five hundred party members in the country. In addition to strong government controls, the people have become disillusioned with past Communist leaders, who have promised them the moon, and after being supported, have absconded with the funds. The nationalistic movement in Iran, however, has been followed with great interest; the feeling among the people is that any coming revolution would go hand in hand with the exiling of all foreign influence, short of US assistance.

25X1 8. In that respect, the thinking people of Haiti generally feel that it would be a great mistake for the US Government to give financial aid to the Haitian Government, without personally administering to its distribution.

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[REDACTED] In fact, the average Haitian would welcome the return of US occupation forces as it formerly existed.

9. Finally, there is a desperate need for a better educational system in Haiti today. Only those who can afford it, receive a formal education, and 70 per cent of the children go completely uneducated. In Cap Haitien, the second largest city, there is only one private school. Rural schools

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are only open when weather permits; transportation is usually impossible, the schools themselves are falling apart, and only open subject to the whims of the teachers, who continue to draw pay regardless of their presence. This lack of educational facilities, together with the burden of taxation, has taken the desire for advancement out of the hearts of the young Haitians. Even those who can afford it, graduate only to earn jobs that will supply them with sufficient funds for amusement and entertainment. Doctors' sons no longer follow their fathers' professions, nor do lawyers' sons or other professional people.

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